

Montana Transportation Commission

September 8, 2005 meeting ~ 8 am

Community hall, 420 Highway 2 ~ East Glacier

SUMMARY MINUTES

Please note: the complete recorded minutes (audio files) are available for review on the commission's website at http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/trans_comm/meetings.shtml. You may request a compact disc (containing the audio files, agenda, and minutes) from the transportation secretary at (406) 444-7200 or ldemont@mt.gov. Alternative accessible formats of this document will be provided upon request. For additional information, please call (406) 444-7200. The TTY number is (406) 444-7696 or 1-800-335-7592.

The following is an unofficial **summary** of commission action; the formal minutes of this meeting will be reviewed and approved at the next commission meeting.

Agenda item 1: 2006-2008 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program

Commissioner Espy moved to accept staff recommendations to approve the 2006-08 STIP; Commissioner Kottel seconded the motion. All five commissioners voted aye.

Agenda item 2: St. Mary Bridge construction

Commissioner Kottel moved to accept staff recommendations to approve preliminary engineering for the St. Mary bridge project in Glacier County using earmarked funds from SAFETEA-LU, contingent upon the non-federal matching share for this project being provided from a source other than the State Special Revenue Fund; Commissioner Griffith seconded the motion. All five commissioners voted aye.

Agenda item 3: Bank stabilization and protection of US Highway 89

Commissioner Kottel moved for approval of the *Bank stabilization/protection of US Highway 89* project to the program using earmarked funds from SAFETEA-LU, pending matching funds from a source other than the State Special Revenue Fund; Commissioner Espy seconded the motion. All five commissioners voted aye.

Agenda item 4: Twin Bridges bike/pedestrian path

Commissioner Griffith moved to accept staff recommendations to approve the addition of the *Twin Bridges bike/ped path* CTEP project to the program; Commissioner Espy seconded the motion. All five commissioners voted aye.

Agenda item 5: Proposed Helena area Urban Highway System addition and functional classification revisions

Commissioner Kottel moved to accept staff recommendations to approve the following recommended functional classification and Urban Highway System changes along the frontage road corridor extending from Colonial Drive in Helena south to Jackson Creek Road in Jefferson County, pending FHWA approval:

- Revise the functional classification of Colonial Drive from Winne Avenue to the urban limits from a local road to an urban collector.
- Revise the functional classification of Capitol Drive from the urban limits to Old Highway 282 from a local road to a rural major collector, including the crossroad connection to the new interchange ramps.
- Revise the functional classification of Old Highway 282 from Capitol Drive to Jackson Creek Road from a rural minor collector to a rural major collector.
- Add Colonial Drive between Broadway Avenue and the urban limits to the Urban Highway System.

Commissioner Espy seconded the motion. All five commissioners voted aye.

Agenda item 6: Speed limit studies

Secondary 225 – Bootlegger Trail
MT 200 – Plains West
Secondary 503 – Foy's Lake after study
US-93 – Elmo
MT 200 – Trout Creek

Commissioner Kottel moved to accept staff recommendations to approve the recommendations presented for *Secondary 225 – Bootlegger Trail* (Cascade County) and *MT 200 – Plains West* (Sanders County); Commissioner Griffith seconded the motion. All five commissioners voted aye.

Secondary 225 – Bootlegger Trail (Cascade County)

- A 45 mph speed limit beginning at the intersection with US 87 and continuing north to station 12+00 on project S 312(5), an approximate distance of 1,200 feet.

MT 200 – Plains West (Sanders County)

- A 45 mph speed limit as currently posted beginning at station 154+00, project F 6-1(18) (400 feet east of the intersection with Lewellen St.) and continuing west to station 142+00, an approximate distance of 1,200 feet.
- A 55 mph speed limit beginning at station 142+00, project F 6-1(18) (800 feet west of the intersection with Lewellen St.) and continuing west to station 119+00, an approximate distance of 2,300 feet.
- A 65 mph speed limit beginning at station 119+00, project F 6-1(18) and continuing west to station 97+00 (500 feet west of the intersection with Airport Rd.), an approximate distance of 2,200 feet.

Secondary 503 – Foy's Lake (Flathead County)

No action was required on this item.

US 93 – Elmo

Commissioner Howlett moved to set the speed limit on US 93 through Elmo at 45 mph between Alexander Lane and the junction with highway 28, at 55 mph on US 93 from the junction with Highway 28 to mile marker 78, and 55 mph on US 93 from Alexander lane to

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mile marker 76; Commissioner Griffith seconded the motion. Commissioner Espy agreed with the motion but reiterated the point that without enforcement, the limit may be of no use. All five commissioners voted aye.

MT 200 – Trout Creek

Commissioner Howlett moved to adopt a 35 mph speed limit through Trout Creek; Commissioner Espy seconded the motion. At Commissioner Kottel's request, Frazier clarified items on the map: the blue line represents a 70 mph zone; there is no step down to the 35 mph. Howlett asked about a slow down. Frazier said we recommend a 500-foot transition per 10-mile increment. Lynch suggested the commission give the department the latitude to do the step-down. Currie clarified that the motion is to have 35 mph through the community, with step-ups to 70 mph on either side of that. Commissioner Howlett said yes, as did Commissioner Espy. All five commissioners voted aye.

Agenda item 7: Letting lists

Commissioner Howlett moved to accept staff recommendations to approve the lettings for September, November and December 2005, and January 2006; Commissioner Espy seconded the motion. All five commissioners voted aye.

Agenda item 8: Certificates of completion

Commissioner Griffith moved to accept staff recommendations to approve the certificates of completion for June 2005; Commissioner Espy seconded the motion. All five commissioners voted aye.

Agenda item 9: Liquidated damages

The commission took no action therefore the liquidated damages stand. *Update: A representative from Westway Construction arrived after the meeting was adjourned. The commission will allow this issue to be reheard at their next meeting (November 1 in Helena).*

Agenda item 10: Project change orders

June and July 2005

Commissioner Howlett moved to accept staff recommendations to approve the change orders presented for June and July 2005; Commissioner Griffith seconded the motion. All five commissioners voted aye.

Communication with local governments

Base stabilizer

Liberty County has been exploring the use of a base stabilizer on gravel roads. In their experience, once applied, the base stabilizer hardens the road and helps preserve the gravel. The road then requires less maintenance (has cut down grading to once a year) which keeps costs down. Recognizing that the potential for many of their gravel roads to be paved is limited, they are interested in seeing if this would be something that the state could assist them with for use on gravel secondary roads.

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=> Currie said if the intent is to use federal secondary funds for this, we must run this by FHWA and make sure it's Federal-aid eligible. Lynch said as our construction costs increase, our counties are not going to get ahead. We need to look at the non-paved roads and see what we can do to help maintain those, because they will continue to be a reality in Montana.

=> Lynch said we will follow-up on this. We will get the federal perspective when we next meet with Jan Brown and Mike Duman.

New construction in Browning

Commissioner Howlett wanted to follow-up with Representative Juneau's comments regarding the new construction in Browning (high school and casino) and the need for access and safety. We need to be proactive in planning for these things rather than waiting until they're built, e.g. sidewalks around the facilities. => Howlett asked for a report next meeting.

Agenda item 11: Commission discussion

Chairman Kennedy said yesterday during the tour, we saw an innovative snow fence built by one of the MDT crews. The governor has emphasized the importance of doing things differently in a cost-effective manner. We were very impressed with the use of old concrete guardrail posts to form a snow fence that is visually attractive. This was a very creative use of waste materials for a safety project. Chairman Kennedy asked Director Lynch to put these folks forward for the governor's award for efficiency and innovation. Mick Johnson thanked the commission for the recognition and promised to provide photos.

Commissioner Kottel moved to direct the Department of Transportation to prepare and advance a nomination of the crew members involved to the governor's office;

Commissioner Espy seconded the motion. All five commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Espy recommended a picture be taken of the snow fence.

Old business – Danford Drive

Reardon said the hearing was conducted on August 22 in Yellowstone County. A number of people attended, mostly residents of Danford Drive. The meeting was noticed in the Billings Gazette and notice was also sent to the Yellowstone County Commission. No one appeared in opposition, and no written comments of opposition were received. Reardon requested the commission formally vote on the abandonment and authorize the chairman to execute the formal order of abandonment. Commissioner Griffith made the motion as requested; Commissioner Espy seconded the motion. All five commissioners voted aye.

Upcoming meetings/workshops of interest

Because of the skyrocketing fuel costs, the remainder of this year's commission meetings will be held in Helena, rather than in Anaconda and Red Lodge as had been planned. The commission will likely travel two or three times a year in order to visit each transportation district once every other year. The 2006 commission meeting schedule will be set during the November 1 meeting.

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